Emergency Communications
Operational Assessment and Results

Recommendations for Phase 1 - FY19

Version 5

August 11, 2018

This packet represents the final iteration of the materials presented to the leaders of Williamson County during briefings over the week of August 6, 2018. Numerous changes were integrated into this final version of the briefing packet. These changes came from feedback during the meetings and from the two updates to the Operational Assessment document.

Long-Term Goals Supported by Report
• Use a Phased (Multiyear) Approach to Implement All Changes to Minimize Impact to Floor Staffing
• Separate Call Take and Dispatch Responsibilities
• Improve Education and Feedback Capabilities Through Organizational Changes and Professional Development
• Progressively Re-Evaluate Workload and Work Distribution to Determine Necessary Improvements

Specific Report Items for First Phase

1. **Staffing Level is Inadequate – Need to Separate Call Take from Radio Dispatch Functions**
   A. Call taking and radio dispatching roles need to be separated to relieve this duty from the radio dispatchers
   B. Training / trainer capacity is limited to only a few new employees and many of the support roles for education, quality assurance, logistics, etc. are performed as secondary responsibilities to a console-based position

2. **Supervision is Lacking**
   A. Frontline Supervisors (Lieutenants) are unable to supervise as they are tied to call taking and radio dispatching as a primary telecommunicator
   B. Frontline Supervisors lack adequate training as supervisors and lack support personnel to assist with managing the number of personnel on their assigned shift

3. **Redefined Organizational Structure / Lack of Support Roles**
   A. Focus on developing call takers and maintain radio dispatch capabilities, to include cross-training employees to all roles
   B. Develop a workable organizational structure with clear roles and expectations to include support positions – approved with appropriate buildout plan / phases
   C. Create and hold accountable support personnel in the Professional Standards Division
   D. Bolster support in the Technology Division with a dedicated IT professional in the building
   E. Utilize teams and employee driven groups for education and feedback in the Ops Division

4. **Academy Program Needs Updating <Indicative of Entire Education Program>**
   A. Lack structure, materials, and consistency in Academy and education programs
   B. Lack space and work environment tools to include radios and support tools used
   C. Lack cross-trained trainers, shift-based trainers, feedback specialists, and employee mentors

5. **High Attrition Rate / Retention of Employees is Low**
   A. Evaluate workload and worktime - including on-call and overtime utilization (throughout document)
   B. Consider a salary study to attract/recruit new employees with 9-1-1 / dispatch experience
   C. Implement Proactive Stress Management Programs
   D. Improve processes and system to promote existing staff and to hire experienced dispatchers

6. **Plan for Future Growth**
   A. Develop minimum standards for dispatch agencies for both technology and agency driven policy change control
   B. Consider reimbursement model for dispatched services
   C. Do a workspace layout analysis to promote communication with call takers and dispatchers
   D. Setup all positions with 9-1-1 answering capabilities

Specific Actions – Phase 1

Item	Description
Eight (8) Telecommunicators	Add eight (8) full-time employees for call take responsibilities – these employees shall serve as call takers until replaced by new employees, added in later phases, before beginning their radio dispatch training
Add Eight (8) Trainers (by Stipend)	Add eight (8) training stipends for shift-based trainers, equaling 2 per shift, for a designated employee to support console based and floor education
Add Four (4) "Qs" (by Stipend)	Add four (4) Quality Assurance stipends for shift-based quality assurance personnel, equaling 1 per shift, in support of feedback and continuous quality improvement
Redefine Organizational Structure	Update the organizational chart to reflect three (3) divisions: Technology/Logistics, Operations, and Professional Standards
Retitle Positions to Match Function / Business Needs	Rename Managers and Captains as Division Directors Rename Professional Development Manager as Chief of Staff Rename Captain / Commander as Manager (or Coordinator) Rename Lieutenant as Supervisor Rename Sergeant as Specialist Rename Lead (Telecommunicator 4) as Senior Telecommunicator Remove the numbers (1-3) from Telecommunicator
Reorganize to Create a Professional Standards Division	Redefine three (3) positions to initiate the Professional Standards Division which is responsible for the academy, accreditation, continuing / ongoing education, and quality improvement / assurance programs. New positions would be the **Professional Standards Division Director**, the **Education Program Coordinator**, and the **Academy Supervisor**. An alternative consideration is to set the requirements for the Education Program Coordinator to include a Master's of Education (M.Ed., M.A. Ed., or M.S. Ed.).
Supervisors Off Consoles	Supervisors shall move, as staffing allows, off primary call take or radio dispatch responsibilities to provide direct supervision
Reclassify four (4) Telecommunicators as Operations Specialists	Reclassify 4 Telecommunicator positions to create 1 position per shift to support the Supervisor – Ops Specialists will have call take and dispatch responsibilities in this phase
Retitle / Reclassify Telecommunicators	Align all telecommunicator positions within the same grade, funded through one of several mechanisms to allow for the career ladder, to greatly simplify hiring and career ladder promotions.
Create a Senior Level Telecommunicator	Create a lateral career move for telecommunicators that advance through the time and competency requirements of the career ladder. This move would be at their same pay, just to a higher grade, allowing for easier / simpler planning of merit.
Revise Career Ladder	Update Career Ladder to simplify process, eliminate "up-or-out" promotion requirement, and to improve ease of hiring outside experience
Buildout Training Lab	Increase training lab space from 4 to 8 employees

Consideration for Professional Standards Division

Item	Description
Education Program Consultant	Consider reduction of 4232 monies to cover Professional Services to bring in an education specialist / consultant to help define, setup, and implement the Academy and other education / quality assurance programs

Current Actions and Details of Proposed Phases of Implementation

	Ref Item	Item	Description	MCP Page
Current Actions	4-C	Comprehensive Stress Management Program	Working with EAP on setting up this program - should not have a budgetary impact – includes Supervisor training	New Document Reference Pages to be Added
	5-A	Academy Update	Fix issues with academy materials and academy employee concerns as identified in the report	
	2-B	Supervisor Education	Outside education specific to Public Safety Answer Point (PSAP) / Telecommunicator supervision for floor supervisors - outside training for team related to improved evaluation and operations	
Phase 1	1-A	Call Takers (Phase 1)	Create 8 new FTEs for call taking	
	3-B / 5-D	Reclass TCOs	Fund all TCO positions at the same grade - funded to a level that allows for the career ladder - eliminate the need for constant "shell game" with PCNs	
	4-B	Expand Training Lab Space	Increase training capacity in the simulation lab from 4 to 8 positions	
	1-B / 4-A / 4-C	Stipend Training Specialists	Add 8 training stipends for shift-based trainers (2/shift) - adjust current amount to support 8 for 12 months (Develop JD to reflect more than console training)	
	1-B / 4-A / 4-C	Stipend Quality Assurance Specialists	Add 4 Quality Assurance Specialist stipends for shift-based quality assurance personnel (1/shift)	
	3-C	Professional Standards Division Director	Reclass to create the Professional Standards Division Director - need to create a true Professional Standards Division over the next 3 years with clearly defined roles and responsibilities - although console-based support is beneficial, the academy, continuing education, and quality assurance programs will require dedicated personnel (consider EMS Clinical Practices as a good example)	
	3-B	Clean-up Current Titles	Reclass "TCO4s" to TCO level - Consider reclassification to create education specialists (CHANGE TO INCLUDE NEW TITLES)	
	3-B	Reclassification of Several Positions	Update the JD for the Custodian of Records to include Accreditation, Compliance, and TAC responsibilities Update the JD for the Office Manager to include Administrative Manager responsibilities (to include Accreditation Manager)	

This document references the specific number and letter that corresponds to an associated item from the "Specific Report Items for First Phase" list contained in the document in Section 2.

Current Actions and Details of Proposed Phases of Implementation

	Ref Item	Item	Description	MCP Page
Phase 1	5-B / 5-D	Career Ladder supporting performance pay and skill set advancement (eliminating the "up or out" plan)	Plan A - Have a career ladder to a set amount of money that scaled to either 2.5% performance money or 5% incentive pay for skill set advancement (5% for phones, 5% for each radio dispatch skill) Plan B – offer stipends for credentialing in each area – merit to be paid on base pay Plan C – use separate accounting fund for "career ladder" which can augment pay	New Document Reference Pages to be Added
	5-D	Career Ladder to Merit Transition Plan	Transition of positions from career ladder to merit with title and grade change - setup so that 1 year after attaining a set salary level through performance pay or skill set advancement, the reclassification is title and grade only, no pay increase. (Plan B – transition from stipend pay to new position at same rate)	
	3-(A-E)	Approve new Org Chart and structure (with buildout plan)	Buildout plan based on staffing / filling in of call takers	
	3-C / 4-A	Academy Supervisor	Add Academy Supervisor to Org Chart - focus on success of the newest employees	
	2-A	Lieutenants Off Consoles	Allow true supervision - ASAP	
	2-B	Reclass to achieve "Sgt" level positions – will be called Operations Specialists	Create entry level leadership positions - 2 / shift - allowing each Operations Specialist the opportunity to do console work and assist with supervision - goal would be 1 on the console, 1 off the console rotating responsibilities in support of the Lieutenant	
	6-A	Minimum Standards for Dispatch Agencies	1) Establish minimum standards for technology and tools used in dispatch for all WCEC agencies 2) Implement approved change control policies for agency driven procedural changes	
	3-C / 4-A	Add Education Program Coordinator	Create a new FTE or reclassify the Education Lieutenant to create an Adult Education Coordinator (M.Ed., M.A.Ed., or M.S.Ed. preferred)	

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"Specific Report Items for First Phase" list contained in the document in Section 2.

Current Actions and Details of Proposed Phases of Implementation

	Ref Item	Item	Description	MCP Page
Phase 2	1-A	Call Takers (Phase 2)	Create 12 additional FTEs for call taking	New Document Reference Pages to be Added
	4-B	Add Radios to Training Lab	Increase training capacity to include radios in the training lab	
	1-B / 4-A / 4-C	Additional Stipend Quality Assurance Specialists	Add 4 additional Quality Assurance Specialist stipends for shift-based quality assurance personnel (totaling 2/shift)	
	3-D	Add IT Professional to Building	Add Tech Position for in-house support that is funded by EC but under IT management / rules	
	6-C	Workspace Analysis	Dependent on staffing levels – evaluate how the floor should be configured for optimum utilization of call take and dispatch roles	
	1-B / 5-A	Annual Staffing Analysis	Starting with the first "surge" of new FTEs - need to assess impact of call takers only	
	6-D	Additional 9-1-1 Positions	9-1-1 District Funding Request - All positions be upgraded to allow call taking - better floor / console utilization	
	2-B	Night Ops Captain Position	Redefine - Need better supervision support, into the evening hours, for the Lieutenants	

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Current Actions and Details of Proposed Phases of Implementation

	Ref Item	Item	Description	MCP Page
Phase 3	1-A	Call Takers (Phase 3)	Create 4 additional FTEs for the purpose of call taking	**New Document Reference Pages to be Added**
	1-A / 5-A	Radio Dispatchers	Evaluate the need for additional coverage, based on radio loading / workload for dispatchers	
	1-B / 4-A / 4-C	Transition Stipend Trainers to Education Specialist Positions	Create FTEs to replace 4 stipend trainers with TCOs - 4 educators move into "ICE" roles for team to include initial education (Academy) / Cont. Ed / Enrichment.	
	1-B / 4-A / 4-C	Transition Stipend Quality Assurance Positions to Q Support Positions	Create FTEs to replace 4 stipend Quality Assurance Specialists with TCOs – These 4 QA Specialists move into feedback / education roles to assist with ongoing education.	
	3-B / 5-A	Add Logs Support and Asst. Admin Manager Positions	Additional staff to support admin functions, equipment, and vehicles used in support of 9-1-1 / dispatch operations	
TBD	4-B	Increase Base Pay	Consider advice from MCP on base pay increases - consider a plan for hiring experience	TBD

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